

Danforth Locomotive and  
Machine Company  
Market Street and Mill Street  
Paterson, New Jersey  
Passaic County  
(Danforth, Cooke, & Co.)  
(Cooke Locomotive & Machine Works)

HAER No. NJ-8

HAER  
NJ,  
16-PAT,  
8-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

DANFORTH LOCOMOTIVE AND MACHINE COMPANY  
(Danforth, Cooke, & Co.)  
(Cooke Locomotive & Machine Works)

HAER  
NJ,  
16-PAT,  
B-

DATE: 1810-1819, with later alterations  
1880-1881, NJ-8-A and NJ-8-B

LOCATION: Market and Mill Streets  
Paterson, New Jersey

DESIGNED BY: Unknown

OWNER: Unknown

SIGNIFICANCE: The Danforth site is representative of many of the manufacturing facilities in Paterson. First built upon in the early years of the nineteenth century, the mill lots housed a number of textile processing plants, and served, at least in part, as a machine shop at one time. With the rise of the railways in the second half of the century, the lots were consolidated under one owner, new buildings constructed, and heavier industry, in this case the manufacture of steam locomotives, dominated.

TRANSMITTED BY: Monica E. Hawley, Historian, 1983

The following is the result of a deed search done at the time of the survey:

COOKE MILL #1, MILL LOTS #4 and #5

"Beginning on the South face of the wall of the present middle canal at the Northwest corner of mill lot No. 3, thence running (1) Southerly along the West side of said lot about 190 feet to Market (formerly Congress) Street; thence (2) Westerly along said Market Street 200 feet to the southeast corner of mill lot No. 6; thence (3) Northerly along the East line of said lot No. 6 about 190 feet to the said South face of the wall of said canal; thence (4) Easterly along said wall 200 feet to the place of beginning."

Lot #4 is the eastern half of this tract, 100 x 190 also known as the Stone Mill Lot. and Lot #5 is the western half of the tract, the Jaffray Mill Lot, 100 x 190.

In 1813, James Sheperd established the first chemical bleaching facility in New Jersey at Acquackanock (now Passaic). Following a sojourn in Connecticut, and another at Little Falls, Shepherd leased Mill Lots #4 and #5, along with 288 square inches<sup>2</sup> of water, from the S.U.M. in 1827. Within two years the Washington Bleach Works were established, employing fifteen people.<sup>3</sup>

In 1831, Shepherd divided the tract, sub-letting each lot separately. Lot #4 was sub-let to Samuel Wheeler, George Bicknell, and James Bruce, along with the "Stone Mill" Shepherd had constructed to house his bleachworks. From the deed, it can be inferred that the leasees agreed to continue Shepherd's operations.<sup>4</sup> The partnership, however, was short-lived, and soon reorganized, replacing Bicknell with Henry N. Wild. This partnership also broke up, in 1836, Wild's share going to Bruce,<sup>5</sup> who assigned his entire interest (including that previously held by Wild) to Wheeler.<sup>6</sup> Roswell Colt purchased the land outright in 1840, and it remained part of his estate for over a quarter of a century.<sup>7</sup> In 1849, Wheeler leased the building to David G. Scott, founder of the Franklin Manufacturing Company, for a five year term. Three years later (1852), Charles Danforth and John Edwards purchased Shepherd's lease on the mill, though Scott's sub-lease remained in effect until 1854.<sup>8</sup> Danforth and Edwards sold the lease to the Danforth Locomotive and Machine Co. in 1865,<sup>9</sup> and the company purchased title to the property from Colt's heirs the following year.<sup>10</sup>

After Shepherd divided the lot in 1831, he leased Lot #5 to Peter Walker.<sup>11</sup> The lease changed hands several times in the following few years, while the mill building was used for spinning cotton.<sup>12</sup> By 1848, the lease was in the hands of Thomas Roger who occupied, and probably owned, the Carroll Mill, a cotton mill situated on Lot #5.<sup>13</sup> Thomas Rogers sold the lease to Jacob and Jason Rogers in 1849,<sup>14</sup> and the two brothers contracted for an additional 288 square inches of water from the SUM the same year.<sup>15</sup> Jason Roger's interest was transferred to his brother in 1854,<sup>16</sup> and two years later, the lease on the lot was sold to Alfred Bates and Thomas France.<sup>17</sup> It reverted to Jacob Rogers in a foreclosure in 1857.<sup>18</sup>

The property passed back and forth several times between Jacob and Jason Rogers until it was sold to the Eagle Mill Manufacturing Co. in 1861.<sup>19</sup> Eagle sold the lease to Jacob Rogers the following year,<sup>20</sup> and he, in 1864, sold the lease on the lot to Edward S. Jaffray.<sup>21</sup> Jaffray sub-let the property to other parties until 1875, when he sold it to Edward Watson and Henry Cunningham.<sup>22</sup> Upon their declaring bankruptcy in 1878,<sup>23</sup> Jaffray repurchased the lease, and sold it to Danforth Locomotive and Machine Co., which already held title to the Lot, in 1879.<sup>24</sup>

Thus, in 1879, the Danforth Locomotive and Machine Co. held clear title to both Lots # 4 and #5. Three years later, the Company's name was changed to the Cooke Locomotive and Machine Works. Cooke's held the Lots until 1902 when the New Jersey General Security Company, a real estate holding company, purchased the properties.<sup>25</sup> In 1930, they were sold back to the SUM.<sup>26</sup>

Cooke Mill #1 Footnotes

1. Abstract of the title of the SUM as to Cooke Mill #1, p. 1.
2. Essex Transcripts 9-124.
3. Fisher Census 1929.
4. Essex Tr. M-40.
5. Ibid. N-172.
6. Ibid. N-168.
7. Passaic Deeds D-198.
8. Ibid. R-550.
9. Ibid. W-2, 127.
10. Ibid. Y2, 245.
11. Essex Transcripts I-195.
12. Ibid. I-198, I-286 I-476, I-512, I-515, K-426, L-213.
13. Ibid. O-96.
14. Ibid. O-146.
15. Ibid. O-153.
16. Ibid. 2-389.
17. Ibid. A-2, 62.
18. Ibid. C-2, 415.
19. Ibid. K-2, 420.
20. Ibid. L-2, 558.
21. Ibid. U-2, 6.
22. Ibid. L-5, 159.
23. Ibid. G-5, 159.
24. Ibid. I-6, 250.
25. Ibid. I-15, 530.
26. Ibid. A-36, 463.

COOKE MILL #2, MILL LOT #2

"Beginning on the North side of Congress Street at the Southeast corner of mill Lot #3, now occupied by A. King & Brothers at a stone, thence running Easterly in a line with the Street 100 feet to mill lot #1; thence along West bounds of said Lot #1 Northerly 190 feet to the wall forming the South bank of the present upper canal; thence Westerly along the same 100 feet to the Northeast corner of aforesaid mill Lot #3; thence Southerly along the East bounds of said Lot #3, 190 feet to the place of beginning on Congress Street."

The most easterly of the Cooke Mill lots, adjoining the Hamil Mill Lot, mill lot #2 was originally sold by the SUM to Roswell Colt in 1813 for \$2,000.<sup>2</sup> Two months after he had purchased the property, Colt sold it for \$3,000 to Robert Collett, conveying with the land one square foot of water to which the leasee was entitled,<sup>3</sup> by the original deed. Colt agreed to maintain the main dam and upper canal, insuring sufficient water-flow to the mill site, and guaranteed a fall of at least twenty feet between the upper canal and "the raceway fronting the lot in Congress Street." However, Collett was restricted to the use of the lot, which was not to be, "...used or employed for the purpose of carrying on any manufacture of gun powder, vitriol, spirits of turpentine, or varnish or a pottery or the tanning of leather." Furthermore, any building constructed on the lot had to be constructed "of stone or brick and covered with slate or tile or sheet iron or tin or lead."<sup>4</sup>

Within the period 1814-1815, Collett built a cotton mill on the rear of the lot, 50' x 72' and four stories high,<sup>5</sup> possibly using the \$11,500 he borrowed from Roswell Colt in 1814. In a subsequently mortgage of 1815 from the Newark Banking and Insurance Company, Collett puts up a cotton factory and lot of ground as collateral for the \$10,800 loan.<sup>7</sup> Defaulting on this latter loan, the mill lot was seized by the sheriff of Essex county and sold the highest bidder, Roswell Colt, in 1816.<sup>8</sup>

In 1822, Colt leased the lot to Abraham Godwin, Thomas Rogers, William Whitehead and John Clark,<sup>9</sup> who had formed a partnership to manufacture cotton and cotton machinery. With the property, was the right to two square feet of the Society's water. That year, the firm erected a machine shop (later a blacksmith shop) 24' x 105' on the lot.<sup>10</sup> Fisher's census of 1825 records that "Godwin, Rogers, & Co." had three shops in operation: a cotton mill of 812 spindles, with which it spun 1360 lbs. of cotton weekly attended by forty employees; a foundry, which employed 10 hands and produced 2-1/2 tons of castings weekly; and the machine and blacksmith shop which employed fifty-six men. By the time of the next census in 1827, the cotton factory had 1580 spindles, consuming 120,000 lbs. of cotton and spinning 106,000 lbs. of yarn annually, two power looms weaving 16,800 yards of cloth in the year, and employing four men, eleven women and forty-five children; the foundry had thirteen employees, with 448,00 lbs. of iron melted down to 397,000 lbs. of iron casting in a year, along with 16,500 lbs. of brass castings annually; the machine shop had grown to sixty-eight men. Two years later, according to Fisher, the cotton factory had 2184 spindles, consumed 230,000 lbs. of cotton, produced 200,000 lbs. of yarn and 36,000 yards of Fustian made on three power looms, annually, with seventy-four employees; the machine shop had merged with the foundry, the combination employing 118 hands, and turning out 1,020,000 lbs. of iron and 35,000 lbs. of brass castings that year.<sup>11</sup> In 1832, Thomas Rogers and William Whitehead left the partnership,<sup>12</sup> and that same year, the cotton mill was operating 2316 spindles, consuming 203,222 lbs. of cotton in the previous year, and keeping seventy-three men, women and children off the street. The machine factory had expanded to 210 men in the meanwhile.<sup>13</sup>

In 1842, Charles Danforth bought the interests of the surviving partner of the original firm, Abraham Godwin for \$46,000.<sup>14</sup> The next year, Danforth renewed the lease on the property with Thomas Oliver, an heir to the mill lot and a

descendant of Colt's father-in-law.<sup>15</sup> With the increasing size of the cotton factory and machine shop demanding more power, Danforth leased an additional 288 square inches of water from the SUM in 1844. With the decision to manufacture locomotives, Danforth created a new partnership of himself, John Edwards, John Cooke and Edward Prall, which was to be called Danforth, Cooke and Company. To each of the partners, Danforth assigned varying size shares in deeds dated 1852.<sup>16</sup> The first Danforth, Cooke locomotive was completed the next year.

The lease to mill lot #2 of the Cooke works was sold by the partners to the reorganized Danforth Locomotive and Machine Company in August 1865.<sup>17</sup> One year later, the descendants of Roswell Colt and his wife sold the plot to the company outright for \$19,166.<sup>18</sup> After a change of the corporate title from the Danforth Locomotive and Machine Company to the Cooke Locomotive and Machine Company in 1882,<sup>19</sup> the Cooke company sold the mill lot to the New Jersey General Security Company in 1902, for \$72,000.<sup>20</sup> It was later one of many tracts transferred to the SUM by N.J.G.S in 1930.<sup>21</sup>



Footnotes: Cooke Mill Lot #2

1. Essex Transcripts B 622.
2. Essex Transcripts B 622.
3. Essex Transcripts D 158.
4. Essex Transcripts D 158.
5. Trumbull 136.
6. Essex Transcripts A 409.
7. Essex Transcripts A 436.
8. Essex Transcripts D 279.
9. Essex Transcripts D 150.
10. Trumbull, 136.
11. Fisher, 1829.
12. Essex D 150.
13. Fisher, 1832.
14. Passaic Deeds: F 624.
15. Passaic Deeds: F 624.
16. Passaic Deeds: G 145 & 8 474, 485, 492.
17. Passaic Deeds: W-2, 127.
18. Passaic Deeds: Z-2, 38.
19. Passaic Deeds: A-306.
20. Passaic Deeds: A-53D.
21. Passaic Deeds: A-36, 463.

COOKE MILL #2, MILL LOT #3

"Beginning on the North side of Congress (now Market) Street at the Southwest corner of mill Lot #2, and running thence Northerly 190 feet; thence in a Western direction in a course with the present upper canal 105 feet to the Northeast corner of Mill Lot #4; thence Southerly along the East bounds of Lot #4, 120 feet to the said Congress Street; thence Easterly along said Street 95 feet to the place beginning."

Cooke Mill Lot #3 was first purchased from the SUM by Roswell Colt for \$2,000 in 1813.<sup>2</sup> Colt sold the tract for twice that amount four months later to Aaron, Robert and Brown King,<sup>3</sup> and at the same time lent them \$10,000 with the mill lot as collateral.<sup>4</sup> Sometime in the next two years, the Kings used the loan to build a cotton mill 40' x 75', three stories high. The trap rock used in its construction was quarried from the hill above Spruce St., around the site of the Ivanhoe Paper Works, and floated down the middle race using a scrow.<sup>5</sup> After it was completed, the King mill was to house the first power looms in Paterson, which the Kings made themselves after a Scottish model.<sup>6</sup>

In 1814, Brown King left the partnership, receiving \$1,050 for his share of mill lot.<sup>7</sup> His exit proved not unwise, for in 1821, the land was seized in a foreclosure of the mortgage.<sup>8</sup> Auctioned off to the highest bidder, the deed for the property returned to the hands of Roswell Colt, who had offered \$4,500.<sup>9</sup> Colt either leased or rented the mill and land, and the accompanying one square foot of water, to Caleb M. Godwin, who used it as a cotton factory. At the time of Fisher's first industrial survey in 1825, his factory was operating 960 spindles, which was to rise to 1224 spindles by 1827. That year, Godwin's \$27,000 plant was turning 90,000 lbs. of cotton into 80,000 lbs. of yarn a year with the attentions of two men, five women, and twenty-five boys and girls.<sup>10</sup> In Fisher's 1829 census, fifty-six employees were operating 1488 spindles, winding 150,000 lbs. of raw cotton into 130,000 lbs. of yarn in the Godwin factory. Three years later, consumption had dropped to 138,000 lbs. annually, but spindles numbered 1500, and there were fifty-two employees.<sup>11</sup>

In an unrecorded transaction, the SUM bought back the property from Colt, and subsequently sold it to Charles Danforth in 1848 for \$5,000.<sup>12</sup> Around 1852, a brick machine shop four stories high, 30' x 134', was built adjoining the King mill to house the embryonic locomotive manufactory.<sup>13</sup> The old cotton mill had since been converted into a millwright and pattern shop.

Danforth and his partners sold the lot, with the rest of the assets of the partnership, to the newly organized Danforth Locomotive and Machine Company in 1865.<sup>14</sup> The firm changed its name to the Cooke Locomotive and Machine Company in 1882 and sold the lot to the N.J. General Securities Co. in 1902, who sold it to the SUM in 1930.<sup>16</sup>

Footnotes: Cook Mill #2, mill lot #3

1. Essex Transcripts, B 624.
2. Essex Transcripts, B 624.
3. Essex Transcripts, C 85.
4. Essex Transcripts, A 374.
5. Trumbull, 136
6. Sci. Am. 1859, 314.
7. Essex Tr. C 134.
8. Essex Tr. E 140.
9. Essex Tr. E. 140.
10. Fisher, 1827.
11. Fisher, 1832.
12. Passaic Deeds M 631.
13. Trumbull 136.
14. Passaic Deeds W-2, 127.
15. Passaic Deeds I-15, 530.
16. Passaic Deeds A-36, 463.